

Attorney's Docket No. 34976/238448

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re: Aylward, et al.  
Appl. No.: Not Yet Assigned  
Filed: Concurrently Herewith  
For: APPARATUS FOR HANDLING AND  
PACKAGING FRIABLE TABLETS

December 27, 2001

Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, DC 20231

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Dear Sir:

Please amend the above-identified application as follows:

**In The Specification:**

On page 1, immediately after the title of the application, please insert the following paragraph:

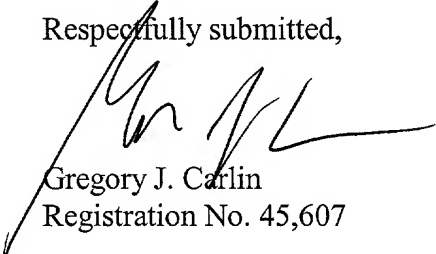
**--CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS--**

This application is related to, and is a continuation of, U.S. Application No. 09/876,822 filed June 7, 2001, which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. U.S. Application No. 09/876,822 claims the priority of U.S. Application No. 09/658,966, filed September 11, 2000; U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/077,363, filed March 9, 1998; and Application No. PCT/US99/05103, filed March 9, 1999.

REMARKS

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

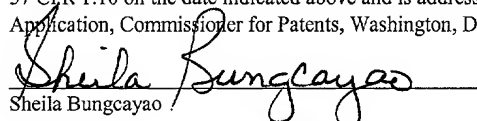
Respectfully submitted,

  
Gregory J. Carlin  
Registration No. 45,607

CUSTOMER NO. 000826  
ALSTON & BIRD LLP  
Bank of America Plaza  
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000  
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000  
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000  
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111

"Express Mail" Mailing Label Number EL910630969US  
Date of Deposit: December 27, 2001.

I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to Box Patent Application, Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.

  
Sheila Bungcayao

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231, on \_\_\_\_\_, 2001.